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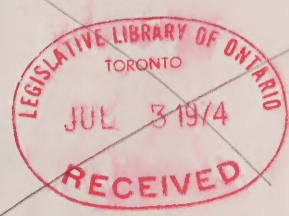
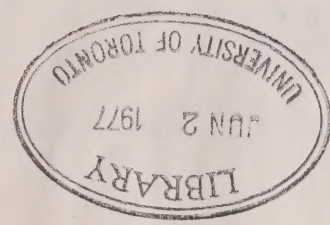
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Operational Plans for Early Childhood Services



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Government
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OPERATIONAL PLANS
FOR
EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

The Government of Alberta

March, 1973

OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Foreword

The Government of Alberta intends to give increasing attention to the problem of meeting the special needs of young children, ages 0 to approximately 8 years. This paper attempts to develop a coordinated approach to this problem by considering instructional materials, human and physical resources, in-service education of staff, parent-community involvement, responsibilities for decision-making and organization in terms of a comprehensive plan. Early Childhood Services (ECS) will be established as a separate branch of the Department of Education, whose influence and services will be the result of the coordinated activities of the Departments of Health & Social Development; Culture, Youth & Recreation; Advanced Education and Education. The following beliefs are basic to the plan:

1. Early Childhood Education is an important part, but only one part of a comprehensive system of Early Childhood Services (ECS).
2. Provincial and local organizations through which ECS are provided must encourage and maximize the involvement of parents and the community. ECS must include the provision of such educational, nutritional, social and health services that will help young children.
3. Services offered by ECS need not develop simultaneously. Priorities must be set for phasing-in programs. For example, activities that meet the needs of handicapped children will take precedence over those activities involved in establishing universal early childhood programs. Initially, program development and support will be directed toward children from birth to less than 5 years 6 months and their parents. This will have strong implications for present primary school programs.

4. Every effort should be made to avoid unnecessary "labelling" of children and parents in ECS programs.
5. Early Childhood Services should not be viewed as an extension downward of the present primary program.
6. Early Childhood Services should be provided to the child and his family on an optional basis. No child under compulsory school age will be required to attend.



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OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Introduction

This paper is intended to be an operational policy statement by the Government of Alberta with respect to Early Childhood Services. The paper states the Government's philosophy, policies and priorities on the many aspects of implementing a phased-in publicly supported program of Early Childhood Services. Each policy statement is followed by a brief explanation which outlines the reason for supporting the particular position.

The Worth Commission Report, the Minister's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Education, and a policy paper entitled, *Opportunities for Infants*, by L. W. Downey Research Associates Ltd. have provided the major basis for the statement of Government policies contained in this paper.

The past decade has produced a new body of educational, psychological and medical research that has documented the crucial importance of the first eight years of life. At no other period is the child so susceptible and responsive to positive environmental influences which can enhance and expand his development. Environmental influences, however, if sterile or inappropriate, may well have negative effects on a child's intelligence, motivation and ability to learn, concept of himself, relationship with others, and on later health and education achievements. A suitable environment during the first few years of a child's life can provide nourishment for feelings of self-worth and sense of self-respect, motivation, initiative, ability to learn and to achieve.

Eventually, children, ages 0 - 8 years, should have access to ECS based on particular individual and group needs, talents and interests. There should be opportunities for the young children and their parents to develop their abilities and to maximize their potential. At the present time, formal group activities for children younger than four years, six months are not planned. However, various programs to assist parents of children younger than four years, six months are desirable and will be supported.

Providing comprehensive health, social and educational services to young children and their parents will not be an easy task. The coordinating, meshing and sharing of all available human and physical resources at every level can result in more effective programs for young children and their families.

In summary, Early Childhood Service programs should have the following immediate major thrusts:

1. Strengthening the role of the family as a first and fundamental influence on child development;
2. The early detection of health, mental and educational handicaps;
3. The provision of remedial and preventative health and education programs on a priority basis to children and parents of children who need special services.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this paper, *board*, *Minister*, and *private school* shall be defined as per the Department of Education Act.

The terms, *district*, *parent*, *public school district*, *school building*, *separate school district* and *trustee* shall be defined as per the School Act.

Other terms used in this paper shall mean:

Operator - a public or separate school board or a non-profit making private institution, agency or individual that is providing an approved ECS program.

Early Childhood Services (ECS) - health, educational and social services or activities on behalf of children between 0 to approximately 8 years of age and their parents.

Teacher - a person holding a valid Alberta Teaching Certificate with at least three years of training and a major in Early Childhood Education.

A PHILOSOPHY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

The main purpose of Early Childhood Services (ECS) is to strengthen the sense of dignity and self-worth within the young child and his family. During the early years, and in harmony with the child's developmental patterns and sequence, many opportunities should be provided for the child to develop qualities such as self-reliance and initiative, awareness of self and others, ability to give and follow directions, powers to judge and control impulses, ability to cope with failure and stimulation of aesthetic awareness. Since the elements of thinking and the components of language formation can influence a child's self-concept, their development should be considered as important. Helping the child to gain increased competency in the use of senses and refinement of motor skills leads to a greater awareness of the capabilities of the body and the limitations imposed by the environment. Each child's world of experience, people and things, should be extended in breadth and depth, to span all areas of needs and interests.

Much evidence indicates that the home and community in which a child grows is a major influence in personal development. Demographic factors (housing, income, ethnic groups), cognitive facilitating factors (materials, toys, language structure) and emotional factors (parents' own emotional security and self-esteem) are three particular factors of the home environment which must be considered.

To meet the child's health, educational, social, emotional and physical needs requires a comprehensive and pervasive approach that goes beyond providing just a school experience. Because the activities intended to develop one aspect of the child's total personality affect all other parts, these activities must be integrated into a meaningful whole. Rather than segmenting services to young children, we must concern ourselves with the relatedness of all learning endeavors and services that will nurture both the young child and the family. In order to create a total learning environment, parent and community resources, in addition to the school, must be fully mobilized and utilized.

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

POLICY STATEMENT: Goals of Early Childhood Services

Early Childhood Services has as its major long range goal to strengthen the sense of dignity and self-worth within the child and his family. More specifically, this means increased emphasis upon:

- (a) Meeting physical, nutritional, and dental needs of children.
- (b) Strengthening emotional and social development by encouraging self-confidence, spontaneity, curiosity and self-discipline.
- (c) Stimulating mental processes and skills, with particular attention to conceptual and verbal aspects.
- (d) Establishing and reinforcing patterns and expectations of success to promote self-confidence.
- (e) Increasing the child's capacity to relate positively to family and community, while at the same time, strengthening the family's capacity to contribute to the child's development.
- (f) Fostering in the child and his family, a responsible attitude toward society, while stimulating constructive opportunities for people to work together on a personal and community basis toward the solution of their problems.

REASON:

The above policy statement evolves directly from the philosophy that has been stated for Early Childhood Services -- *to strengthen the sense of dignity and self-worth within the child and the child's family.*

POLICY STATEMENT: Support for Approved Public and Private ECS Programs

Beginning the school year 1973-74, the Department of Education, in conjunction with other Departments of Government will support on a selective basis, public and separate school districts and non-profit-making private institutions, agencies or individuals that offer approved Early Childhood Programs.

REASON:

The Government has a responsibility in the field of Early Childhood Services to provide an educational experience in conjunction with health and social services. Appropriate financial support and mechanisms for providing leadership and coordination then become necessary. Private institutions and agencies along with the public and separate school systems can provide alternative delivery systems for ECS. This will give parents of children the opportunity to make choices in terms of their personal values and beliefs and the special needs of the child. Government support of both the public and private sectors can help to develop the potential for creativity and flexibility. The result may well be more effective program models suitable to the Alberta scene.

Selective programs targeted to the needs of the physically, mentally and socially disadvantaged children must be a first consideration.

Common sense and research evidence suggest:

1. that early prevention rather than later remedial treatment is desirable;
2. that programs for children with special handicaps deserve attention first.

SUMMARY:

ECS must provide for alternative organizations and support for comprehensive educational, health and social services to young children and their parents. Selective programs to meet the needs of the physically, mentally and socially handicapped children will be a first priority.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PERSPECTIVE TO EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ECS)

Basic Principles for Early Childhood Services

ECS must be a comprehensive and responsive system that is in direct contact with other systems locally and provincially. As such, its organizational structure should be based on the following principles:

1. *ECS must provide the conditions necessary for change.*

A system of Early Childhood Services should eventually include children from birth to approximately 8 years (or to the end of Grade 2); their parents and families; teachers; administrators and para-professional educators; school nurses; medical-dental personnel; nutritionists; recreation leaders; social workers; psychologists; and other community workers and resource people. These people, individually and collectively, should be involved in continually examining their contribution to ECS. ECS should be organized so educational, social, and health needs of young children and their parents become a central concern.

2. *ECS must facilitate feedback.*

If the ECS system is to provide a coordinating and communicating function, each part of the system must know the effect it is having on young children. Interaction within ECS, between departments of Government and other agencies should result in the continuous reinforcement and/or modification of goals, policies and programs. A desirable organization should have an inherent, on-going, self-renewing dimension that results in minimal bureaucratic, rigid and "locked-in" procedures.

3. *ECS must support a high degree of diversity*

Within a broad provincial guideline, diversity should show itself at the local level in the goals, policies, and programs of ECS. Such diversity is facilitated if services are provided by a variety of private, community, and governmental agencies. Services should be offered in a variety of locations including the home, school(s), churches, and other institutional and community settings. Parents should have the option of using the services of ECS or rearing their children in any manner that is not reprehensible to our society.

4. *ECS must seek to avoid over-lapping of services.*

Diversity and complexity must not become excuses for the over-lapping of service. Persons working in ECS must consciously seek to minimize any over-lapping of services and to refrain from stifling children's and parents' initiative by doing too much for them. The organization of ECS should facilitate cooperation, meshing, sharing and effective and efficient use of appropriate human and physical resources at both the provincial and local levels.

5. *ECS must compromise the forces of integration and decentralization.*

In the case of the ECS, decentralization implies a decision-making role for parents, both individually and in the community. This decision-making role might carry with it at least partial control of finances. Decentralization also implies that a multiplicity of agencies may assume some responsibility for the development of young children. Carried to extremes, decentralization could cause disintegration of the system. Hence, there is the need for a judicial balance of integrative and decentralizing forces.

6. *ECS must provide for planned development but allow for uneven growth.*

All areas of ECS need not develop at the same pace. Imbalances will be self-correcting in that advances in one program area will stimulate advances in other program areas.

The concept of uneven growth implies that the various sub-programs in ECS should be allowed to develop at different rates. Although it is probably desirable to develop health services first, health services for young children could be developed either before or after educational services.

However, the principle of unbalanced growth does not imply the adoption of *laissez-faire* philosophy. There is a need to maintain a general overview so that ECS programs are based upon identified needs. General monitoring of Early Childhood Services, is primarily the responsibility of the Provincial Government. The Government has the responsibility for establishing the initial conditions of the ECS and for carrying out at least enough planning to ensure that all essential services develop as needed.

A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Once a philosophical position has been established, then a needs-assessment becomes an essential part of planning. Often, early childhood programs on this continent have been introduced or carried out without sufficient attention to needs-assessment. Needs-assessment constitutes an integral part of the planning strategy of any planning process, whether the planning is being done provincially or locally.

Prior to discussing needs-assessment, it is important that there be agreement as to what is a *"need"*. A rather simple definition of a need is:

"the difference between what is the desirable state or condition and what is the present state or condition."

This assessment must be made at both the provincial and local levels. It serves as the basis for setting objectives, developing programs and program evaluation.

To conduct a needs-assessment, one must examine the various parts of the system or organization, its environment or context, and the present and future potential of both.

Needs-assessment, to be a useful step in planned change, should be viewed from a multi-level systems perspective and purposefully tied in to other aspects of the on-going decision-making (planning, budgeting, evaluation). A needs-assessment framework for ECS based upon four "levels" of needs follows.

The first Level (A) of needs-assessment is concerned with *Organizational Structure*. An issue of central concern is: What organizational structures, both centrally and locally will be required? What organizational structures, not presently being utilized to their fullest extent, will be required in order to tackle the many problems involved in introducing ECS ?

The second Level (B) of needs-assessment involves *Decision Making*. A basic question is: Who should make what kinds of decisions? For what purposes? What guidelines should be established by the Province? What decisions should be made at the local community level?

The third Level (C) of needs-assessment is concerned with *Using and Improving Human Resources*. Key questions at this level might include: How can mothers reinforce in the home the child's group experiences in the Early Childhood Program? Is the parent-child development program in harmony with the needs of children? Are mothers obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary to provide for the nutritional needs of their children? What kinds of behaviors are required of teachers, instructional assistants, project coordinators....? A full needs-assessment, and hence goal-setting, must be concerned with improving the skills of all professional and lay persons involved in the ECS program.

The fourth Level (D) of concern is *Instructional Support Services*. Example of key questions are: What is required in terms of actual program organization, content and method? How is it to be delivered? What professional staff is required? What instructional assistants and aides will be required? Are adequate health and psychological services available? Are adequate diagnostic services available? Is the physical structure of the plant and the equipment suitable for meeting the requirements of the proposed ECS program?

The decision to implement ECS cannot be made without examining the inter-relationships of the four levels of needs to each other. Questions prompted by examining these inter-relationships may well point to additional needs upon which the success of Early Childhood Services depends.

SUMMARY

A comprehensive approach must be taken to planning ECS programs. Planning must involve determining needs in four broad categories: organization, decision-making, in-service education of staff, and using human and physical resources.

AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

PROVINCIAL STRUCTURE

Early Childhood Services (ECS) is viewed as a joint responsibility of the Provincial Departments of Culture; Youth & Recreation; Health & Social Development; Education and Advanced Education, who have a direct concern with providing services to young children (0 - 8 yrs.) and their parents. Each department will remain independent, but agrees to coordinate its efforts with other departments to provide a more total complement of required services to young children and their parents.

The chart on page 13 indicates the organizational structure at the provincial level. Operationally, the coordinated approach will work as follows:

1. The Cabinet Committee on Education will advise the government on major policy decisions. The Minister of Education will report ECS matters to this committee.

2. The Deputy Ministers of the Departments of Education; Advanced Education; Health & Social Development; Culture, Youth and Recreation, with the Deputy Minister of Education as the leader and initiator, will develop general policy and provide mission level coordination to ECS. Where an operator's license is revoked or where an application to operate an ECS program is not approved, the operator or applicant shall have the right of appeal to the Minister of Education
3. The Coordinating Council will develop specific guidelines and policies for Early Childhood Services. The Associate Deputy Minister of the Department of Education will act as chairman of the Council and provide over-all administrative coordination of ECS programs. The ECS Coordinating Council will consist of directors and/or supervisors from Departments of Advanced Education (1 rep.); Education (2 reps.); Culture, Youth & Recreation (1 rep.); Health & Social Development (4 reps.). These members will represent and maintain a close, functional relationship with education, health and social concerns. In addition to the departmental representatives, each of the five stakeholder groups (See Chart, Page 13) will be asked to appoint one member to the Coordinating Council. The Minister of Education will appoint two other members at large. Interest groups who have special concerns with young children may, at any time, submit briefs to appropriate ministers, deputy ministers or to the Associate Deputy Minister of Education. The Coordinating Council may establish at any time, committees that are required to carry out a specifically designated function or task.
4. The individual supervisors or directors will maintain their proper line relationship to their respective departments and, hence, to their respective Ministers.
5. The Coordinating Council will meet on a regular basis with an established structure and a formal agenda.

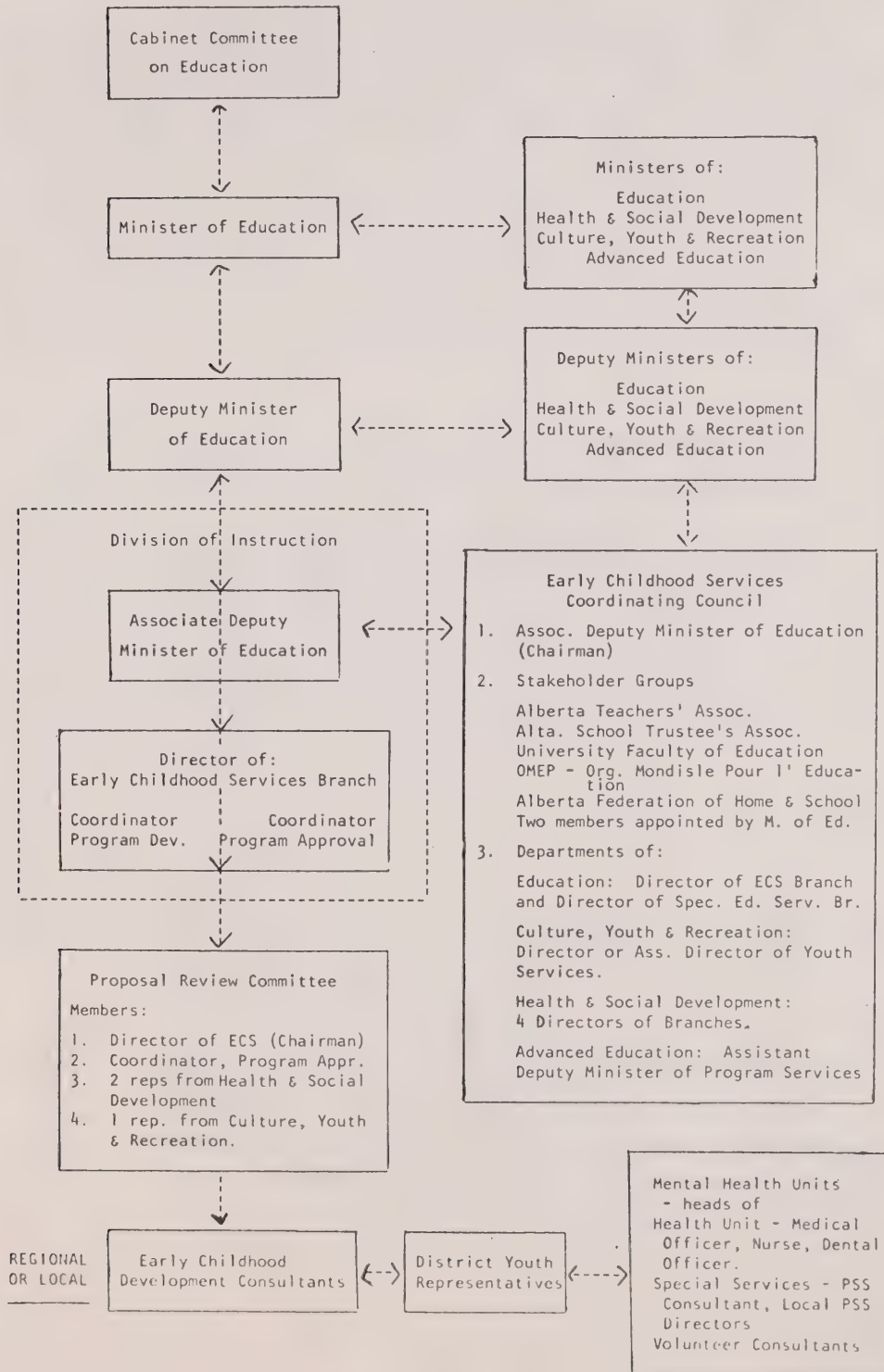
6. The Coordinating Council will provide a lateral communication mechanism for spotting and resolving over-lapping jurisdictions, disproportionate budgetary allocations, redundancies and gaps in programming, and an interdisciplinary view of child development problems as they pertain to mutually common target populations.
7. Formally structured recommendations will go forward to each Deputy Minister that has members of his staff on the Council. The Deputy Minister will then take whatever action deemed necessary or appropriate. The Coordinating Council should be able to provide each Minister with a clearer view of problems within any department and joint problems which might be shared with any other of the three departments.
8. The Director of the ECS Branch will be directly responsible to the Associate Deputy Minister of Education. He will provide general supervision and coordination of the work of all personnel within the ECS Branch including the activities of the Branch's Early Childhood Field Consultants. The locus for educational program development involving children will be under the general direction of the Department of Education. Parent-Community Development programs will be under the Departments of Culture, Youth & Recreation and Health & Social Development. There will, however, be inter-departmental membership on each program committee regardless of where the locus for development of a particular program lies.
9. The Proposal Review Committee will receive proposals from school boards, private institutions, agencies, and individuals. The adequacy and suitability of proposals will be assessed in terms of the guidelines and procedures established by the ECS Coordinating Council. Each proposal will be assessed from an education, health and social services perspective. The Proposal Review Committee will consist of (1) Director of ECS Branch (Chairman); (2) Coordinator of Program Approval, (ECS Branch); (3) Two representatives from the Department of Health & Social Development; (4) Director or Assistant Director of Youth Services, Department of Culture, Youth & Recreation.

COORDINATED INTER-DEPARTMENTAL EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

PROVINCIAL

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION

ADVISORY FUNCTION



LOCAL STRUCTURE

POLICY STATEMENT: Coordinated Structure

At the local level, Early Childhood Services will be a responsibility of the school board or local licensed private institution, agency or individual. A local ECS Advisory Committee should be established to assist in the planning and operation of each program. Local existing organizations may be used or added to. For example, Local Preventive Social Service Advisory Committees with perhaps an added representation of parents or other community groups might well serve the function of a Local ECS Advisory Committee. A Committee should include:

- (1) representative parents of children who are registered in the program. Parents should constitute the majority of the committee;
- (2) local public individuals who are service people - the School Principal and/or Superintendent, members of the ECS staff, the District Home Economist, the Medical Officer of Health, the Public Health Nurse, the Early Childhood Development Consultant, the Preventive Social Services Director, district youth representatives and membership from other community agencies; such as Y.M.C.A., Church and service clubs.

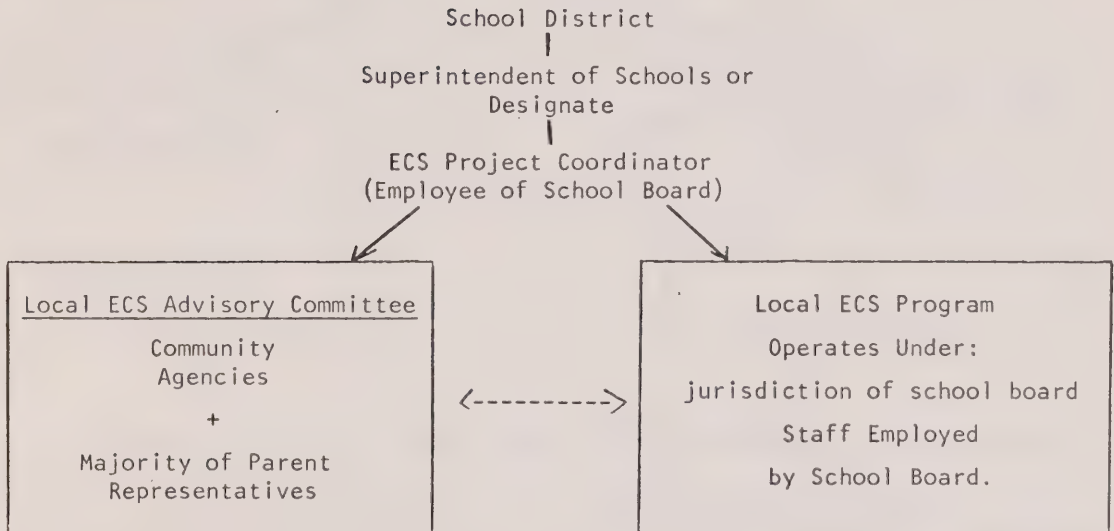
A locally coordinated approach makes possible to parents and communities a choice of three alternative forms of organization.

Alternative #1 - shows the local school staff employed by the school board providing the ECS services. The Coordinator is employed by the school board.

Alternative #2 - shows a licensed private operator providing the coordination and services to children and parents under a contract arrangement to the school board. The school board has final responsibility for the over-all administration and supervision of the program.

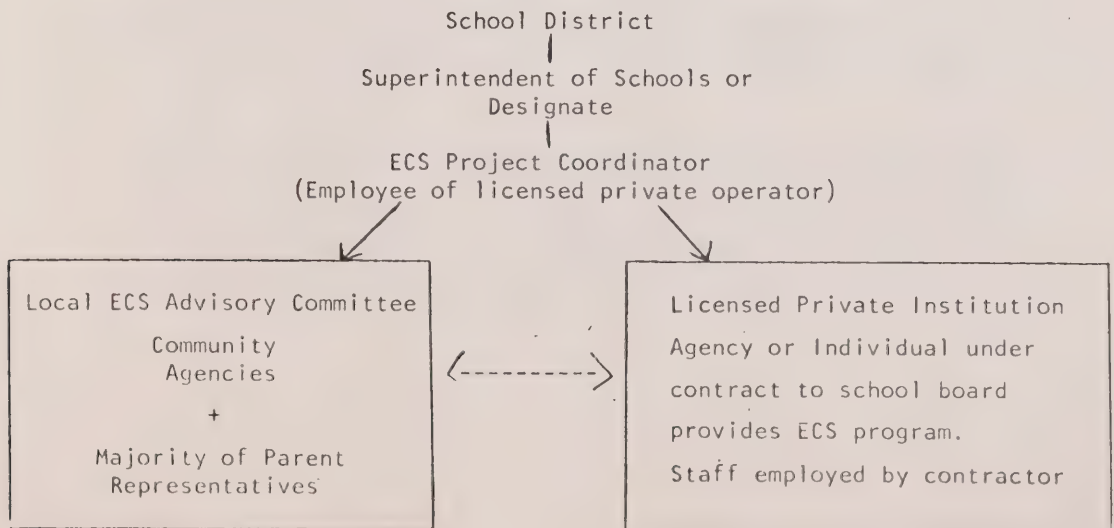
Alternative #3 - shows a licensed, private, non-profit operator providing both the over-all coordination and service. A Local ECS Advisory Committee must be formed. The Local Advisory Committee must approve the ECS program and provide satisfactory evaluation.

ALTERNATIVE #1



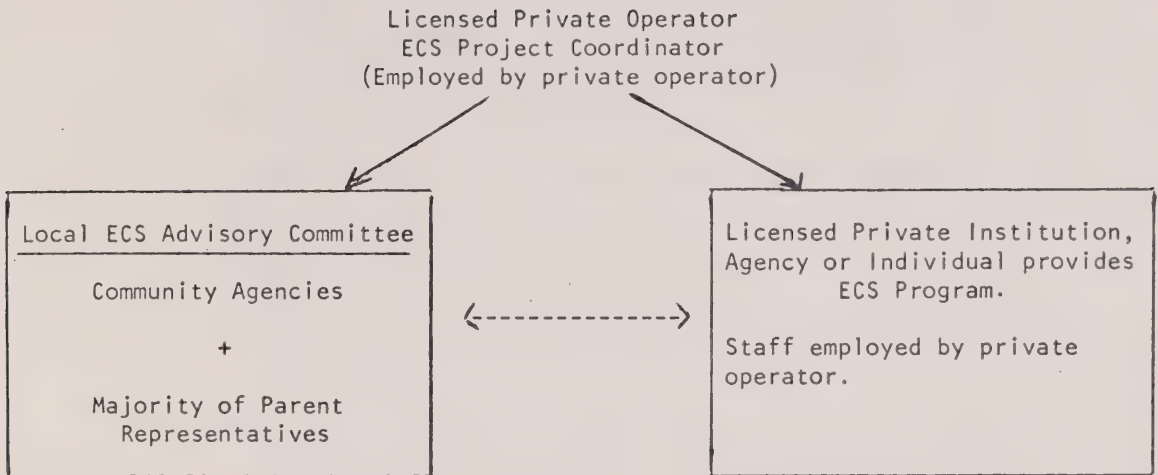
AND/OR

ALTERNATIVE #2



AND/OR

ALTERNATIVE #3



The above charts indicate three possible alternative organizational structures that may be used at the local level for providing ECS programs. Operationally, these coordinated approaches will work as follows:

1. The Local ECS Advisory Committee should participate in the planning, development, and operation of the local program. In the case of Alternative #3, it must have its recommendation(s) accompany any submission to the Provincial ECS Proposal Review Committee. More favourable consideration will be given to those proposals that indicate a strong involvement on the part of parents and community groups.
2. The Local ECS Advisory Committee might give active local support to the program through such activities as: recruiting and providing volunteer aides, work bees, sponsoring parent-child development programs, and development of local toy and book lending centres.

3. Each public or separate school board or licensed operator that proposes to operate an ECS project must appoint a Project Coordinator with suitable qualifications in Early Childhood. The Coordinator's main purpose and responsibility will be to coordinate planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program(s) and provide a contact for parents and consultants locally or regionally and the Provincial ECS Director.
4. Representatives of government departments stationed locally or regionally will maintain their proper line relationship to their respective departments and hence, ultimately to their Ministers but will give joint assistance to Local ECS Advisory Committees to help them in planning and operationalizing of community based ECS programs.
5. The Local ECS Advisory Committee is encouraged to meet on a regular basis with an established structure and formal agenda.
6. Provincial grants for Alternatives #1 and #2 will be paid directly to the school board under whose jurisdiction ECS programs are being provided. Grants for Alternative #3 will be paid to the licensed agency or institution offering the service. Alternative #3 will be considered to be a private school. No grant will be paid to profit making private schools.

REASON:

Locally, the delivery of Early Childhood Services should take many forms. It should involve many institutions and individuals. This will permit maximum use of family and community resources and provide for the development of more flexible and imaginative programs to meet parent preferences.

SUMMARY:

The organizational structures at the provincial and local levels are built upon the principle that education, health and social services to children and their parents should be coordinated. With this principle in mind the following new structures will be established.

1. A Coordinating Council whose membership includes representatives from various stakeholder groups and members at large, and the departments of government which have a direct concern with young children or programs for young children. The Coordinating Council will recommend guidelines and policies that are consistent with the over-all general policies of the Government.
2. The Department of Education will provide the initiating and leadership role in coordinating and administering Early Childhood Services.
3. The Proposal Review Committee made up of representatives from the Departments of Education, Culture, Youth & Recreation, and Health & Social Development will assess and recommend appropriate action with regard to all proposals received from school boards and private operators.
4. A Local Advisory Committee made up of a majority of parents along with community agencies and service people will provide for direct contact and involvement with the community.

DECISION-MAKING

POLICY STATEMENT: Introduction of ECS - a Local Responsibility

(a) School, Home, Community Involvement

The involvement and cooperation of parents and community agencies in the decision-making process which affects vital areas of their own and their children's lives is strongly endorsed. A Local ECS Advisory Committee made up of a majority of parents of children served by the program in addition to representation from local community agencies is highly recommended. Preference will be given to those proposals which have the written support of a Local ECS Advisory Committee.

The exact composition of local advisory committees will vary from community to community depending upon the specific needs of children and the availability of community agencies and consultive services. The committee should be representative of the various sectors of the community in which ECS is to be provided. The Local Advisory Committee to a private operator must be established before the program is recommended for approval to the Proposal Review Committee. Ideally, the genesis of the idea for starting a local ECS will come from the parents of the children who will be involved in the program.

- (b) Local communities with the assistance of consultative services from local departments of government and local professional groups should become involved in setting up their own programs, recommending the language of instruction, securing adequate sponsorship, applying through their school boards or through a sponsoring agency to the Proposal Review Committee for program approval and grants to assist in operating the program locally. It is felt that the needs of children, the characteristics of the locale and the particular attitudes and wishes of the staff and parents will dictate a variety of programs, advisory structures or committees and ways in which people in different communities can work together.

The area of parent involvement and adult education emerges as extremely important when considering the quality of the services to be provided. Parent/Adult Education is a complex field from which several identifiable elements are emerging:

1. In order that services meet the needs of families, parents should be involved early in planning for the service.
2. Programs are more effective when parents and the local community participate in the actual planning and operation of all phases of the ECS program. Parent involvement and cooperation is particularly essential in programs for disadvantaged children.

3. ECS Programs should be tailored and suited to the needs of individuals and communities and to sociocultural, as well as to geographic differences. ECS programs should consider, where appropriate, the employment patterns of married women.
4. A variety of programs will be necessary in order to meet diverse local needs. No one standard program can meet all needs. Alternate methods of delivery of ECS will allow for maximum use of family and community resources and more flexible programs for greater sensitivity to individual needs.

POLICY STATEMENT: Proposal Recommended by Local ECS Advisory Committee

All proposals to be submitted to the Provincial ECS Review Committee should have the formal approval of the Local ECS Advisory Committee and the Board of Trustees (if a school district proposal). If Alternative #1 or #2 is followed, the written recommendation of the Local ECS Advisory Committee should accompany the proposal when it is submitted to the Program Review Committee. If Alternative #3 is followed, the written recommendation of the Local ECS Advisory Committee must accompany the proposal when it is submitted to the Program Review Committee. The Minister of Education must approve the proposal before any educational grants are paid.

REASON:

Programs, to be effective, must have a strong commitment on the part of the parents of the children and the local community involved.

POLICY STATEMENT: Standards and Regulations

Under the direction of the Provincial ECS Coordinating Council, an Ad Hoc Committee will be struck to develop approval standards and regulations for ECS Programs operated by school districts and licensing standards and regulations for privately operated ECS Programs. The Ad Hoc Committee will:

1. Review health (nutrition, sanitation, medical), fire, safety, and financial standards embodied in present regulations of the Preventive Social Services Act, the Public Health Act and the School Act; review the standards and licensing procedures outside Alberta.
2. Review staff-child and program standards presently embodied in the regulations of the Preventive Social Service Act., the Public Health Act and the School Act; and to review the available literature on staff-child and program considerations.
3. Develop a common set of comprehensive regulations which can be approved by the four departments of Government involved in ECS. The regulations will provide a basis for approving or licensing a variety of local Early Childhood Programs in Alberta. The standards developed in the regulations will relate to such areas as: buildings and accommodations; equipment and furnishing; maintenance; health, safety and fire; staff preparation and requirements; nature of program for children and parents, and financial records of conditions if a private operator.

REASON:

Programs which do not meet the specific needs of pupils, do not have the commitment of parents and do not meet adequate program standards are usually quite ineffective and should not receive approval and financial support.

POLICY STATEMENT: Attendance Optional

The attendance of any child at an approved Early Childhood Services program is optional unless the child has attained the age of six years at the school opening date. (Section 133, The School Act, 1973).

REASON:

The principle of parental prerogative at this stage of the child's life should be upheld.

SUMMARY:

ECS envisages a strong involvement of parents and community agencies in the decision-making and general operation of programs at the local level. This is based upon the premise that active involvement of parents and community agencies is necessary to providing effective programs. The recommendation of the Local ECS Advisory Committee should accompany any proposal that is submitted for provincial approval. In the case of a private operator, the recommendation of the Local ECS Advisory Committee must accompany the proposal.

Certain basic standards of service will be guaranteed through the licensing and approval procedures established by the ECS Coordinating Council.

Attendance of any child at an approved Early Childhood Service program is optional.

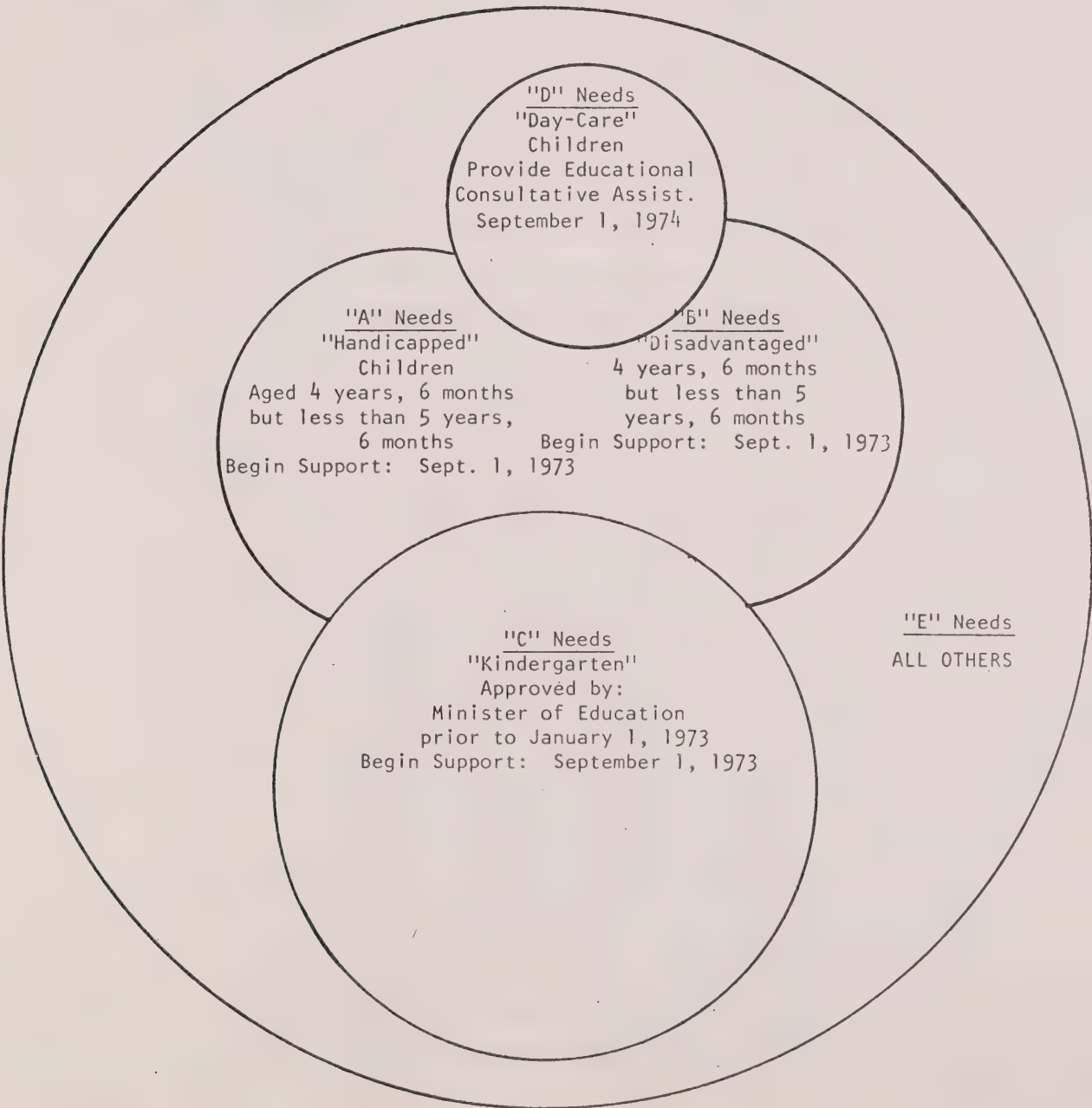
USING AND IMPROVING HUMAN RESOURCES

POLICY STATEMENT: Needs Priorities, Basis for Phasing-In ECS Programs.

Three main factors will determine the extension of services to young children: the degree and nature of need, the financial resources available, and the potential for improving the child and the family's dignity and self-worth. These priorities strongly suggest a gradual rather than a sudden expansion of Early Childhood Services to initially include children who are mentally, physically, emotionally or socially handicapped.

While these children need special understanding and adjustments to their particular needs and characteristics, they are like all other children. Fundamentally, they have the same potentialities, the same curiosity, the same basic human problems to face in life....except that the circumstances of life into which they were born has given them extra ones no children should really have. For the purposes of identifying various global categories of needs, which are not mutually exclusive, five broad categories are indicated in the diagram on the following page.

NEEDS CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES



PHASE 1.

Beginning September 1, 1973 and at any other subsequent time, a school board or licensed private operator may start an ECS program approved by the Minister of Education for:

1. *"Handicapped" Children ("A" Needs)*

- (a) A "handicapped" child is eligible to register in an ECS program if his age as of September 1, 1973 is 4 years, six months but less than 5 years, six months.
- (b) *Characteristics:* Children who have, because of environmental or hereditary factors, physical, sensory or emotional handicaps which limit their normal growth and development. Children with problems of this nature constitute 10% - 15% of any age group.
- (c) *Program:* Remedial and/or adaptive in nature and selective in scope.

2. *"Disadvantaged" Children ("B" Needs)*

- (a) Children who meet the following criteria:
 - (i) Culturally different and/or educationally disadvantaged (school achievement, attendance, drop-out rate, is below acceptable level).
 - (ii) All children who reside within an area of the Province designated for particular attention and opportunity. Certain school districts and particular "inner city" areas of larger urban districts will be designated for special attention.
 - (iii) Any child from a "disadvantaged" area is eligible to enter an approved program if his age as of September 1, 1973 is 4 years, 6 months but less than 5 years, 6 months.
- (b) *Characteristics:* At least 15% of the children have environments that limit them from having a fair start because of such conditions as poverty, severe isolation, protein-calorie malnutrition, single parent care, paucity of language stimulation, detrimental and/or limited home experiences, and deviant cultural differences and ethnic patterns.

(c) *Program:* May be compensatory, preventative and enriching in nature, but selective in scope.

3. *"Kindergartens" Approved Prior to January 1, 1973 ("C" Needs)*

A school district and private institution, agency or individual operating a "kindergarten" program approved by the Minister of Education prior to January 1, 1973, is eligible to apply for ECS program approval or licensing and educational grants based upon the needs of children if it provides services to "kindergarten" children, 4 years, 6 months but less than 5 years, 6 months.

REASON:

While suitable Early Childhood Services would benefit all children, for some it is of critical importance. Therefore, publicly supported Early Childhood Services should be made available, first to pre-school children with handicaps, such as hard-of-hearing and deaf, partially sighted and blind, aberrant behavior, autistic, psychotic, severe speech handicapped, orthopedically handicapped, neurologically impaired, mentally retarded, and the perceptually handicapped, including aphasia and dyslexia. The second priority should be to give special attention to children from certain geographical areas of the province who do not have the equal opportunities. Because of environmental influences they are deprived of the opportunity of competing on equal terms with other children. These disadvantaged children may include those from families and communities where the nutritional and physiological needs are not being adequately met. In terms of their intellectual, social and self-esteem development, these children do not get a fair start.

Because of the nature of the developmental characteristics of children from birth to 8 years, it is particularly important that the child be provided with a rich environment which is stimulating, sequential and uninterrupted. For this reason, careful consideration should be given to providing ECS programs for children which eventually will extend from age 0 to approximately 8 years or to the end of Grade Two.

POLICY STATEMENT: Day Care ("D" Needs)

PHASE 2

Beginning September 1974-75, the Department of Education shall provide consultative services through its field consultants to Day-Care Centres so as to help strengthen the educational component of Day-Care Programs.

"Day-Care" Children

- (a) *Children Involved:* All children who are in day-care centres.
- (b) *Characteristics:* Children of single parents or homes where both parents work.
- (c) *Program:* Preventive and enriching in nature and selective in scope in terms of ability of parents to pay. Initially, the effectiveness of day-care centre programs should be improved by providing consultative and advisory assistance to strengthen the educational component.

REASON:

From infancy to school entrance age, the growing number of families where employment deprives the child of regular care, day-care services must provide a substitute. In the decade from 1960 to 1970, the female labour force in Canada increased by two-thirds. In 1970, married women made up 56.7 per cent of the female labour force. This compares with 45 per cent in 1960. Quality care for all children of working married mothers and working single mothers (unwed, widowed, divorced) is a concern of all levels of government - federal, provincial and municipal. The provision of consultative services by the Department of Education should help to improve the general effectiveness of day-care programs.

POLICY STATEMENT: Certificated Teacher with Early Childhood Major.

Each ECS operator will be required to have at least one teacher on staff who holds a valid Alberta Teaching Certificate with three years of training and a major in Early Childhood Education. The number of certificated teachers required will depend upon the nature of the children's needs and the number of children serviced (see pp. 38 to 39). During the school years, 1973-74, 1974-75, 1975-76, only, where the services of a certificated teacher cannot be obtained, application may be made to the Minister for a Letter of Authority. Letters of Authority will be issued only to those teachers who indicate specific plans to qualify for an Alberta Teaching Certificate with a major in Early Childhood Education with the three year period. No Letter of Authority will be issued during the school year 1974-75 unless the teacher has made suitable progress toward meeting required certification and professional requirements. Persons who are not able to meet the requirements or qualify for a Letter of Authority may be classed as *instructional assistants*.

Teachers planning to work with "handicapped" or "disadvantaged" children and their families should include Special Education courses (from Educational Psychology) in their programs.

REASON:

A major determinant in the quality of the ECS program is the teacher, his personality and the extent of his preparation. Regardless of how effective other services may be, the teacher will ultimately have considerable influence on the success of the ECS program locally. For this reason, it is imperative that only properly qualified persons be employed as teachers. Regardless of how appropriate the personality of the teacher might be for working with children, all ECS teachers can benefit from specialized professional studies. Because of the unique nature of ECS programs, all teachers who teach young children should have training directly related to early childhood education.

POLICY STATEMENT: Training Instructional Assistants

The Department of Advanced Education should supply facilities, places and assistance for training instructional assistants to work and complement the services of qualified teachers. The Department of Education, in cooperation with the related stakeholder groups, will develop standards for the preparation and use of instructional assistants in school systems. College courses, while initially sub-professional in nature, should be such that individuals who become keenly interested in young children will be encouraged to extend this basic preparation to university degree programs. Consideration should be given to establishing a common core of experiences for all instructional assistants. Colleges should not be in competition with universities to provide qualified Early Childhood personnel. Instructional assistants must be prepared to meet a number of diverse needs: to assist with the instruction of non-English speaking children; culturally different and disadvantaged children, and mentally, emotionally and physically handicapped children.

REASON:

Early Childhood Services requires a variety of human resources including different kinds of instructional assistants and aides in addition to qualified teachers in order to meet the various needs of young children and their parents.

POLICY STATEMENT: In-Service Education.

In-service education of the teacher, instructional assistants, volunteer and paid aides must be an integral part of any Early Childhood Program.

All teachers will be expected to engage each year in some form of in-service such as:

- (a) Attending organized in-service sessions sponsored by the school district or private institution or agency;

- (b) Attending a credit course related to ECS at a university;
- (c) Attending a non-credit course offered by a university or college;
- (d) Teaching a course to other teachers either for credit or non-credit;
- (e) Attending in-service activities conducted by various provincial and local staffs of government departments.

Approval of any local program will depend upon there being a plan for in-service training that includes instructional assistants, paid and volunteer aides.

REASON:

Many teachers are using methods that are not well suited to the early childhood setting. Numerous opportunities must be provided for the teacher and other support staff to up-date their practice, as it relates to such things as services available from central government and community agencies and findings from research and current practice.

SUMMARY:

Beginning September 1, 1973, ECS programs for children, four years, six months but less than five years, six months and their parents will be phased-in as follows:

1. Program for mentally and physically handicapped children;
2. Program for children and their parents in geographic areas of the province where, because of circumstances, they do not have a fair chance;
3. "Kindergartens" approved by the Minister prior to January 1, 1973, who can meet ECS guidelines;

Beginning September 1, 1974, the Department of Education shall provide consultative services to Day-Care Centres. /

Each ECS operator will be required to have at least one teacher on staff who holds an Alberta Teaching Certificate with three years of training and a major in Early Childhood Education.

Instructional assistants and teacher aides may be used.

All ECS staff must participate in some form of planned in-service training.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

POLICY STATEMENT: Program Strategies

Within the Provincial guidelines, a number of basic approaches to the development and delivery of local programs should be encouraged.

Basic over-all program strategies could involve a number of approaches that would extend ECS to both urban and rural children alike. These might include:

1. Education for parents of children 0 - 5½ years of age. Specific programs might include: information packages to parents, discussion groups, T. V. programs, home visitor programs, toy lending libraries, video tape programs, community clinics, participation in teacher-aide program, recreation and agriculture extension courses, preventive social services parent-child development programs, pre-natal and post natal clinics, child care and home economics courses for high school girls, work experience for high school girls in day nurseries and ECS programs.....
2. Reaching the child in his home. Specific programs might include: instructional packages for mothers to use, home visitor programs, mobile vans, travelling teacher with volunteer aides, T. V. programs, toy lending libraries.....

3. Reaching the child in his home combined with group experience. Specific programs might include: an instructional package for mothers plus part time group attendance with teacher and aides; T. V. plus some kind of group experience, T. V. programs for children plus correspondence courses for mother; Home Visitor program - toy demonstrator plus small group experiences using travelling teacher and small van.....
4. Group experience for young children. Specific programs might include: use of local community facilities (halls, churches, recreation centres...) with travelling teacher and student aides, teacher and beginning teacher(s) on practicum.....

REASON:

No one basic approach, in itself, is likely to be adequate in meeting the specific needs of children and their parents in rural and urban communities of Alberta. Any one or more of a number of programs for children and parents might be selected because of its applicability to a particular set of needs.

POLICY STATEMENT: Program Guidelines.

Within the operational policy statements made in this paper, specific guidelines which relate to education, health and social services will be prepared for use by local teachers, project coordinators, instructional assistants, advisory committees and others. These guidelines will need to be both comprehensive and specific.

REASON:

Program guidelines are required in order to provide direction and assistance to local ECS Advisory Committees, school boards, teachers, instructional assistants and others concerned with developing program proposals and providing effective locally based programs for young children.

POLICY STATEMENT: Consultative and Supervisory Services

The Department of Education will provide consultants and supervisory personnel with a variety of backgrounds of preparation to assist teachers, instructional assistants, coordinators and administrators of schools, school boards and private institutions, agencies or individuals to develop, implement, and evaluate the education component of Early Childhood Programs. The Departments of Health & Social Development and Culture, Youth & Recreation will provide consultative assistance in the planning and implementing of local programs to complement the educational component so as to help provide a comprehensive and integrated delivery of services based upon community needs. In many communities, it may be necessary for supervisory and consultative staff from all levels of government to help sensitize parents and communities to the seriousness of certain children's needs.

Many local school boards and private operators will require consultative assistance in determining local needs, developing goals and objectives, planning programs, equipping rooms, arranging pupil transportation, and obtaining and maintaining parental involvement. Staff members of the ECS Branch who are responsible for giving local assistance may be located in Regional Offices of Education or in Unit offices of the Department of Health & Social Development.

Immediately following a government decision to support the introduction of an educational component into ECS, the ECS Director will carry two major leadership and coordinating responsibilities:

1. Develop in-service education plans in order to use and improve human resources in the community and region.
2. Develop actual provincial program guidelines; gear up field consultants to provide administrative assistance, develop specific plans for approving educational programs for ECS, develop specific job descriptions for Early Childhood Development Consultants and hire the same.

The two major responsibilities will involve:

- (a) *Using and Improving Human Resources (Providing In-Service)*
 - (i) *External Participants* - Parent-Child-Community Development (Health & Social Development; Culture Youth & Recreation would take major responsibility for this aspect).
 - (ii) *Internal* -
 1. Teacher-Child-Parent Involvement (Major responsibility of Education for In-Service).
 2. Teacher and Support Staff Training (Major responsibility of Education and Advanced Education).
- (b) *Instructional Program and Support Services (Providing Resources)*
 - (i) *Instructional Program Development*
 1. External program component(s) (Major responsibility of Health & Social Development and Culture, Youth & Recreation for developing program for parents and other community participants).
 2. Internal program component(s) (Major responsibility of ECS to develop program for students, teachers, instructional assistants, school administrators, and teacher aides).
 - (ii) *Administrative Assistance* - Helping districts and community groups to organize.
 - (ii) *Facilities* - renovating facilities, transportation, equipment, program approval and assessing programs and making recommendations to the Minister. Shared responsibility of Departments of Health & Social Development, Culture, Youth & Recreation and Education.

REASON:

Local groups may require the assistance of specialized consultants to help them identify needs, establish goals, develop program strategies, marshall resources, and plan for evaluating the degree of effectiveness to which programs achieve stated objectives.

POLICY STATEMENT: Instructional Grants and Support Term.

There shall be paid to an operator of an approved ECS program a grant for each registered pupil. This grant will include \$12.00 per child for instructional supplies and equipment. The grant will be based on a half-year which is defined as 90 full-time equivalent school days (approx. 540 hours). Approved ECS programs which operate less than 90 full-time equivalent days will be eligible for a pro-rated fraction of the grants. The number of hours per day, the number of days per week, or the particular months of the year the child attends shall be at the discretion of the local authority.

REASON:

A formal group experience balanced by a healthy home environment is considered desirable. Local needs and conditions should determine the program schedule.

POLICY STATEMENT: Eligibility Criteria and Grants for "Handicapped" Children (age 4 years, six months but less than 5 years, 6 months).

For each "handicapped" child identified according to the Provincial ECS Criteria and registered with the Provincial ECS Registry, the school district or private operator will be eligible for a per pupil grant providing the pupil is attending an approved program. The amount of the per pupil grant will depend upon the specific category of the child's handicap.

Grants for mentally, emotionally and physically handicapped children shall be paid on the following schedule:

CATEGORY DESCRIPTION

PER PUPIL GRANT (based on
90 full-time equivalent
days attendance per school
year

1. Mentally Retarded
2. Blind and Visually Impaired
3. Hearing Handicapped
4. Physically Handicapped
5. Emotionally Disturbed

\$555
\$335
\$695
\$615
\$695

REASON:

Larger grants are necessary for mentally and physically handicapped children than for "normal" children because of the specialized and individualized nature of the program components. A per pupil grant is provided in order to ensure greater flexibility in developing programs for both school and non-school approaches to assisting these children and their families.

POLICY STATEMENT: Per Pupil Grant for "Disadvantaged" Children.

An operational educational grant equivalent to 65% of the full-time per child grant for elementary school pupils ($65\% \times \$558 = \365) will be paid to a public or a separate school district which offers an approved Early Childhood program to "disadvantaged" young children.

REASON:

The grant paid is higher because of the additional program components required to meet the special needs of these children and their parents.

POLICY STATEMENT: Per Pupil Grant for "Normal" Children in "Kindergartens" approved by January 1, 1973 (age 4 years, 6 months but less than 5 years, 6 months).

An education grant of \$260 per child (50% of \$558) will be paid to a public or a separate school district which, during the school year 1972-73 (approved by January 1, 1973), offered an approved program for "normal" children providing the program meets ECS program guidelines. "Kindergartens" which, in 1972-73 serviced "handicapped" or "disadvantaged" children and which are able to meet ECS standards will be eligible for per pupil grants according to the rates stated above for these children.

REASON:

The grant for "normal" children registered for an Early Childhood Services Program should be equivalent to one-half of the full-time equivalent grant of a regular elementary school pupil.

POLICY STATEMENT: Per Pupil Grant to Private Schools, Agencies and Individuals.

The grant payable to any private school which is licensed and whose program(s) has been recommended by the Program Review Committee and approved by the Minister of Education will be eligible for grants equal to the amount received by separate and public school districts for "handicapped" children and \$200 per child for all other children.

REASON:

Grants paid to private schools, agencies and individuals for "handicapped" children should be equal to those paid public or separate schools providing these schools meet the ECS guidelines.

POLICY STATEMENT: Transportation Grants for "Handicapped" Children and for Some Children in Rural School Districts.

Children should be bused only when absolutely necessary.

School districts and private organizations and agencies approved by the Minister are eligible to claim grants for the transportation of severe mental or physically handicapped children that require transportation. The grant shall be paid as per the regulations Part B, *Transportation and Maintenance of Pupils*, School Foundation Program Fund Regulations, 1973.

In rural areas only, school districts and private organizations and agencies approved by the Minister may claim grants for the transportation of children that require transportation to an approved ECS program. The regulations related to receiving the grants are those included in Part B. *Transportation and Maintenance of Pupils*, School Foundation Program Fund Regulations, 1973.

REASON:

Many local programs that do not require busing children can be developed. Any operator intending to offer an ECS program should explore the alternatives carefully prior to making any decision to bus children. However, some rural children may not have an opportunity to attend ECS Programs unless transportation is provided.

POLICY STATEMENT: Renovation and Capital Costs.

Where suitable facilities for an approved ECS program(s) do not exist in a community, grants may be made available from the Department of Education for the necessary renovation or alteration of school and/or community buildings. All such plans for renovations and/or alterations must be approved by the School Buildings Board.

Capital grants for alterations and/or renovations may be paid on the basis of \$20 per registered pupil to a maximum of \$1,000 for each facility or actual cost, whichever is the lesser. The School Buildings Board will process all applications whether public or private according to a set of guidelines.

The stress is on usage of existing space in the school or in the community. That is, no proposals for additions and/or new buildings will be entertained at this time.

REASON:

The utilization of existing facilities in the different communities across the province are matters for local administration and planning. Many vacant classrooms now exist in the province which can be used for ECS programs. In addition, many local communities have facilities which are or can be made quite suitable for group ECS experiences. However, in some cases it may be necessary to renovate certain school and community buildings in order to meet the needs of ECS programs.

POLICY STATEMENT: Local Coordinator

Each local ECS program must have a coordinator with acceptable qualifications in Early Childhood, either at the teacher or instructional assistant level. The Coordinator is responsible for the over-all development of the program, its implementation, supervising the activities of the centre(s) under his jurisdiction, providing reports as requested and working with the Local ECS Advisory Committee.

REASON:

Since the success of a program will depend largely on the effectiveness of local leadership and coordination, the selection of a suitable person is an important consideration.

POLICY STATEMENT: Minimum Staff/Child Ratios and Staffing Units

For each group of 35 children or fraction thereof, there must be a certificated teacher, holding an Alberta Teaching Certificate with a major in Early Childhood Education. In addition to the certificated teacher, other specialized instructional assistants and aides, working under the direction and supervision of the qualified teacher may be required in order to provide a full complement of social, health and educational services.

School districts or private institutions, agencies or individuals applying for a license to operate an ECS program must meet minimum staff/child ratios when providing group experiences for children. These staff requirements are in addition to any assistance that might be provided by provincial or local community resource persons on an intermittent basis. Provision of Early Childhood Services in any group setting shall have over-all staff/child arrangements for "handicapped, "disadvantaged" and all other "normal" children as follows:

ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENTS

1. *"Handicapped" Children:* A certificated teacher is required regardless of the size of the group of children. The number and kind of instructional assistants, paid and volunteer aides will depend upon the particular nature of the children's handicaps. Generally speaking, the staff/child ratio will be much lower than for "normal" children in ECS classes.
2. *"Disadvantaged" and "Normal" Children:* The basic staffing units for "disadvantaged" and "normal" group experiences for children are as follows:

One Instructional Unit (IU) for "disadvantaged" = 18 children.
This means the equivalent of one teacher for every 18 children.

One Instructional Unit (IU) for "normal" = 22 children.
This means the equivalent of one teacher for every 22 children.

STAFF

STAFFING UNIT & EQUIVALENT

1. One certificated teacher for every instructional unit (IU) or fraction thereof if there are 18 "disadvantaged" 1
or 22 "normal" children or fraction thereof

2. If over 18 children in a "disadvantaged" class or 22 children in a "normal" class require one certificated teacher for every 35 children registering and fraction thereof.

Equivalent Fraction

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (a) Instructional Assistants
(College prepared: Child
Development Assoc. or equivalent.) | .5 |
| (b) Paid Aide | .3 |
| (c) Volunteer Aide | .25 |

e.g. A centre with 34 children operating in a "disadvantaged" area requires $34/18 = 1.9$ IU's and might be staffed as follows:

- (a) 1 full-time teacher, 1 full-time instructional assistant, 1 full-time paid aide.
- (b) $1\frac{1}{2}$ full-time teacher, 1 full-time paid aide, $1/3$ time volunteer aide.

A centre with 54 children operating a program for "normal" children would required $54/22 = 2.45$ IU's and might be staffed as follows:

- (a) 2 full-time teachers, $\frac{1}{2}$ full-time instructional assistant
1 full-time volunteer aide.

Three main principles serve as a basis for establishing the above staff/child ratios:

1. Qualified teachers must provide over-all coordination and troubleshooting for the educational services and specifically for (a) diagnosis (b) prescription (c) treatment (d) evaluation as they relate to children in programs.
2. Instructional assistants and/or volunteers may be used as a means of increasing the over-all effectiveness of the total services offered to children and their parents. For example, instructional assistants and volunteer aides who are bilingual are necessary in order that initial communication may be in the child's native tongue. A trained physiotherapist, at least on a part-time basis may be necessary to a program for handicapped children.
3. The local operator should have some flexibility in decision-making within the established framework to meet the particular needs of children.

REASON:

Since the staff of a program is a most important single factor affecting the quality of the program, it is essential that standards of quality and quantity be given careful attention. By defining teacher roles clearly, by defining instructional assistant roles and by grouping children appropriately, teachers can be freed to spend more time on the professional aspects of teaching-interaction, diagnosis, goal setting, program planning and evaluation.

POLICY STATEMENT: "Handicapped" Children Registry

The Departments of Health and Social Development and Education will establish a Central Provincial Registry for "handicapped" children. Each operator will be expected to provide a copy of the data from the medical, educational and psychological assessment on each child to the Central Provincial Registry.

REASON:

Information contained in the registry will serve two main functions:

1. It will be available to Education; Health & Social Development; Culture, Youth & Recreation consultants and local staff for use in program planning and in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the operating program.
2. It will provide a basis for operators to claim grants.

POLICY STATEMENT: Admission to Approved Program for "Handicapped" Children.

Prior to a child being admitted to a program for "handicapped" children, the child must have a general medical, educational and psychological assessment. The data from such an assessment must be recorded in a form provided by the Central Provincial Registry for "Handicapped" Children.

Further, more specific, in-depth assessment and diagnosis may be required at various intervals after the child is registered in the program.

Once a "handicapped" child is duly registered in an approved program, school boards and private operators may claim grants (up to a maximum of \$75.) for the child's pre-admission assessment expenses. Any subsequent assessment expenses shall be the responsibility of the school district, private organization operating the program, or the parents.

REASON:

Effective and appropriate programs can be developed and implemented only if appropriate and reliable data are available on each child.

POLICY STATEMENT: Develop Media Package to Assist Local Planners.

To provide assistance, a basic package of information will be developed which will contain blueprints for equipment, lists of materials available at little or no cost, audio-visual materials that suggest and demonstrate ways of using such materials and plans for developing and using space.

A long range plan should envisage developing and compiling prototypes of suitable equipment and materials for display and demonstration purposes.

REASON:

Parents and local agencies, involved as members of a Local ECS Advisory Committee, need to have access to information on various possible program activities as well as information on the suitability of different kinds of support materials and facilities. At the present time, operators and staffs of existing programs are requesting information on things such as facilities and equipment, patterns of community involvement, and how to develop locally based programs. This demand will increase considerably when public support is given to ECS programs. Community involvement in providing facilities and equipment can prove to be a good starting point for parent involvement. Therefore it is important that communities have access to this basic information.

POLICY STATEMENT: ECS Curriculum Guide and Resource Handbook.

With guidelines from the Provincial ECS Coordinating Council, the ECS Branch will establish an ECS Curriculum Committee(s) whose functions will include the development of an ECS Curriculum Guide and a Resource Handbook for use by local ECS staff and Local Advisory Committees.

REASON:

While the availability of a teacher and other professional and support staff is basic to any good ECS program, valuable ideas contained in a Curriculum Guide can lend support to the philosophy and objectives of ECS programs. The Resource Handbook will provide numerous practical suggestions for personnel involved with ECS programs. The Resource Book will provide assistance to local Early Childhood Services groups about such things as radio and television programs broadcasted for children as well as their parents, facilities and equipment, ideas for community involvement, community resource inventory and in-service education only to mention a few.

POLICY STATEMENT: Proposal Format and Approval.

Operators who wish to have their programs approved for grant purposes must submit a proposal. This proposal, in the case of a private operator, must be accompanied by the Local Advisory Committee's recommendation(s). Approval of the proposal is one condition necessary if the private operator wishes to obtain a license. The proposal format, supplied by the Program Review Committee will reflect a systems approach to planning that will include:

1. Name of Operator.
2. Project Title.
3. Background and rationale for proposal project.
4. Brief statement of objectives in specific and observable terms.
5. Project design - how the proposed total program with its sub-programs is to be carried forward; children involved; staff to be used; and in-service programs.
6. Plans for evaluation of programs on a continuous basis as part of program development.
7. Detailed Project Budget - local salaries, wages, supplies and equipment, internal evaluation, submission of an audited financial statement is necessary if a private operator.

REASON:

During the initial phases of the implementation of Early Childhood Services, it is especially important that careful and systematic attention be given to planning and programming in terms of provincial policies and guidelines. It is anticipated that consultants from the Departments of Health & Social Development; Education; Culture, Youth & Recreation along with local resource people in communities will be available to assist in planning proposals and implementing programs. Local school districts or private operators may require specialized assistance in planning for evaluating their programs in terms of their stated objectives.

By planning for periodic monitoring of outcomes in terms of stated objectives, continuous program improvement can result. The evaluation should provide information relevant to modifying and improving the program so that all aspects of the entire program are responsive to new and changing conditions. Indicators of achievement based upon the framework for Early Childhood Services (pp. 8-10) can serve to improve both evaluative and instructional purposes. This conception helps to make evaluation an integral part of the educational process itself.

SUMMARY

Program Strategies

A number of approaches to developing and delivering ECS programs in Alberta should be explored in order that both urban and rural children may receive this service (see page 30). While bringing children together in formal group settings may be one approach, it is essential that other approaches be used depending upon the specific needs of children in the community.

Program Guidelines

While over-all provincial guidelines will be established within the framework of this paper, considerable local discretion will be given to communities in order that they will be able to meet their local needs.

Consultative Services

The Department of Education, Health & Social Development, and Culture, Youth & Recreation will make their consultative staffs available to local school boards and private operators to assist in the planning, implementing and evaluating ECS programs.

Length of Term

Grants will be paid on the basis of 90 full-time equivalent operating days.

Grants

The amount of grant to be paid an operator of an approved program will be related to the particular needs of children. Grants for mentally and physically handicapped children will be greater than those for "disadvantaged" or "normal" children. Private schools shall receive the same grants for "handicapped" children as public schools. Private schools shall receive grants equivalent to approximately two-thirds of the regular elementary school grant divided by two (half-time attendance). Transportation grants, where it is essential that children be bused, will be the same as those per Part B *Transportation and Maintenance of Pupils*, School Foundation Program Fund Regulations, 1973.

Renovation Costs

Where suitable facilities for an approved ECS program(s) do not exist in a community, capital grants for alterations and/or renovations on the basis of \$20 per registered pupil to a maximum of \$1,000 or actual costs may be approved.

Local Coordinator

Each local ECS program must have a coordinator with acceptable qualifications in Early Childhood Services.

Staff/Child Ratios

School districts and private operators will be required to maintain certain standards with respect to staff/child ratios.

Handicapped Registry

The Provincial Departments of Health & Social Development and Education will set up a Central Registry for handicapped children.

Program Assistance

ECS will develop media packages, curriculum guides, and resource handbooks to assist local communities plan programs.

Proposal

Operators who wish to have their programs approved for grant purposes must submit a proposal to the ECS Proposal Review Committee

GENERAL SUMMARY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

The following statements represent a summary of the policies contained in this paper:

1. Early Childhood Services has as its major long range goal to strengthen the sense of dignity and self-worth within the child and the family by attempting to meet their health, social and education needs.
2. Beginning the school year 1973-74, the Government will support on a selective basis, public and separate school districts and non-profit making institutions, agencies or individuals that offer approved ECS programs.
3. Provincial and local organizational structures through which ECS are provided must:
 - (a) have a coordinated, comprehensive delivery system
 - (b) attempt to maximize the involvement of parents and local communities.
 - (c) use existing physical and human resources to the greatest possible extent.
4. Provincial standards for the operation of ECS will be established, but within this framework much local discretion and initiative may be exercised.
5. Presently operating "kindergartens" will be expected to meet the guidelines established for ECS if they are to receive grants.

6. "Handicapped" and "disadvantaged" children will be a first priority for new programs.
7. A teacher holding an Alberta Teaching Certificate with at least three years of training and a major in Early Childhood Education, will be required for every 35 children. In addition instructional assistants, paid and volunteer aides may be used.
8. The staff of any ECS program will be expected to engage in some form of in-service education each year.
9. Early Childhood Services programs, through necessity will have to be varied in order to meet the needs of urban and rural communities in Alberta.
10. The Department of Education will provide Early Childhood Consultants to assist local operators to plan, implement and evaluate their programs. Consultants and other resource personnel from Health & Social Development and Culture, Youth & Recreation will also be available.
11. Grants for ECS programs shall be based upon a half full-time equivalent school year. (90 days or approximately 540 hours)

Grants paid for children in approved public or separate school programs shall be as follows:

CATEGORY

*PER PUPIL GRANT BASED UPON
90 DAY FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE*

1.	Handicapped	
	(a) Mentally Retarded	\$555
	(b) Blind & Visually Impaired	\$335
	(c) Hearing Handicapped	\$695
	(d) Physically Handicapped	\$615
	(e) Emotionally Disturbed	\$695
2.	Disadvantaged	\$365
3.	All other children	\$280

Grants paid to private operators who provide approved programs shall be:

(a) *Handicapped* - same as for public and separate school district..

(b) *Disadvantaged* - and all other children - \$200

12. In instances where transportation of rural and handicapped children is absolutely required, grants shall be paid as per Part B, *Transportation and Maintenance of Pupils*, School Foundation Program Fund, Regulations, 1973.

13. Renovation of school and community buildings where required will be supported up to a maximum of \$1,000 per unit.

14. Each local program must have a coordinator.

15. Over-all staff/child ratios will be required in order to provide acceptable standards of operation.

16. The Departments of Health & Social Development and Education will cooperate in establishing a Central Registry for "Handicapped" Children.

17. The ECS Branch will develop various materials that will assist Local Advisory Committees and operators to plan their programs.

18. Operators who wish to be approved or licensed will be required to submit their proposal to the ECS Program Review Committee. In the case of a private operator, the recommendation of the Local Advisory Committee must accompany the proposal.

EXPECTED TIME LINE FOR ACTIVITIES CONNECTED WITH INTRODUCTION OF OPTIONAL ECS PROGRAM
IN ALBERTA

	<u>START</u>	<u>FINISH</u>
1. Appoint Director of Early Childhood Services		March 10, 1973
2. Establish plans for appointing members to the Inter-Departmental Coordinating Council.	Feb. 25, 1973	
3. Formal approval of Inter-Departmental Coordinating Council		March 10, 1973
4. Coordinating Council within the framework of this paper will establish initial policies and guidelines for the operation of ECS.	March 15, 1973	April 1, 1973
5. The ECS Coordinating Council should strike an Ad Hoc Committee(s) (a) To review health, fire and safety standards. (b) To review program standards presently embodied in the acts and regulations of Departments of Government involved in ECS.	March 15, 1973	May 1, 1973
6. Work to begin on a Central Registry for "Handicapped" children to serve departments of Health and Social Development and Education.	Feb. 20, 1973	
7. Recruit two Central Office Coordinators of ECS.	March 10, 1973	
8. Recruit consultative staff	March 10, 1973	June 30, 1973
9. Develop guidelines for qualifications and use of paraprofessional staff and determine appropriate child-adult ratios.	Feb. 1, 1973	April 15, 1973
10. Develop media package to assist local ECS planners.	March 10, 1973	
11. Establish ECS Curriculum Committee - Curriculum guide and Resource handbook. Committee: Inter-departmental Representatives, Stakeholder groups, and parents.	May 15, 1973	March 15, 1974
12. Develop ECS Application Form	Jan. 15, 1973	March 15, 1973
13. Local consultative and advisory work. Formation of Local Advisory Committees in preparation for gearing up to operationalize Phase I programs for Sept. 1973.	March 20, 1973	
14. Planning for up-dating professional and paraprofessional staff.	May 15, 1973	
15. Assess proposals received from local school districts and/or private operators.	April 15, 1973	

